Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims:

1. (previously presented) An end-effector device for use with an electrosurgical instrument for performing a minimally invasive surgical procedure, the end-effector device comprising:

an electrode;

a mechanism for coupling the electrode to an electrosurgical instrument;

an insulative sleeve disposed at least partially around the electrode so as to inhibit conduction of electrical current flowing from the electrode to the electrosurgical instrument; and

at least one internal sealing ring disposed so as to inhibit fluid from entering into an interior of the insulative sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during a minimally invasive surgical procedure.

2. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the electrode comprises a scalpel blade, a beaver blade, a hook, a spatula, movable jaws, scissors, a needle point, hockey stick, dissectors, or a probe.

3. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the electrode transmits radiofrequency energy during the minimally invasive surgical procedure.

4. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism provides for removable coupling of the device with the electrosurgical instrument.

5. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the coupling mechanism comprises a mechanical attachment.

6. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 5, wherein the mechanical attachment includes threading within the insulative sleeve for attachment with complementary threading on a mating component of the electrosurgical instrument.

7. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 5, wherein the mechanical attachment includes at least one spring tab or latching member for attachment with at least one protrusion within a housing of the electrosurgical instrument.

8. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the coupling mechanism comprises an electrical attachment.

9. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the electrical attachment includes an electrical connector for electrical connection with a transmission member via a spring member of the electrosurgical instrument.

10. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the electrical attachment includes an electrical connector for electrical connection with a transmission member via a gripping member of the electrosurgical instrument.

11. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the electrical attachment includes an electrical connector having an electrical tab for electrical connection with a transmission member via an electrical platform of the electrosurgical instrument.

12. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 8, wherein the at least one internal sealing ring comprises at least one o-ring.

13. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the end-effector device is constructed so as to be disposable.

14. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 4, wherein the coupling mechanism is configured so as to be incapable of re-coupling to the electrosurgical instrument after once being coupled to and uncoupled from the electrosurgical instrument.

15. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism effectively permanently couples the device with the electrosurgical instrument.

16. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 1, further comprising an insulation layer disposed at least partially around the electrode and one of the at least one internal sealing ring so as to additionally inhibit fluid from entering into the interior of the insulative sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during the minimally invasive surgical procedure.

17. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 16, wherein the insulation layer comprises ceramic material, glass, silicone, polypropylene, fluoropolymer, or insulating plastic.

18. (previously presented) The end-effector device as in claim 17, wherein the insulative sleeve comprises ceramic material, glass, silicone, polypropylene, fluoropolymer, or insulating plastic.

19. (currently amended) The end-effector device as in claim 17, wherein the insulation layer comprises a first insulation material completely encircling part of the electrode, and wherein the insulative sleeve comprises a second insulation material completely encircling the first insulation material ~~layer~~ and abutting the electrosurgical instrument.

Claims 20-48 (canceled).

49. (previously presented) A method for manufacturing an end-effector device for use with an electrosurgical instrument for performing a minimally invasive surgical procedure, comprising: disposing an insulative sleeve at least partially around an electrode so as to inhibit conduction of electrical current flowing from the electrode to an electrosurgical instrument when the end-effector is coupled to the electrosurgical instrument; and disposing at least one internal sealing ring within the insulative sleeve and around the electrode so as to inhibit fluid from entering into an interior of the insulative sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during a minimally invasive surgical procedure.

50. (previously presented)The method as in claim 49, further comprising: disposing an insulation layer at least partially around the electrode and one of the at least one internal sealing ring so as to additionally inhibit fluid from entering into the interior of the insulative sleeve and making contact with any portion of the electrode disposed therein during the minimally invasive surgical procedure.

51. (new) The end-effector device as in claim 1, wherein the at least one internal sealing ring comprises a first sealing ring positioned within a proximal end of the insulative sleeve and a second sealing ring positioned within a distal end of the insulative sleeve, so as to inhibit fluid from entering into the interior of the insulative sleeve from either the proximal or distal end of the insulative sleeve.

52. (new) The method as in claim 49, wherein the at least one internal sealing ring comprises a first sealing ring positioned within a proximal end of the insulative sleeve and a second sealing ring positioned within a distal end of the insulative sleeve, so as to inhibit fluid from entering into the interior of the insulative sleeve from either the proximal or distal end of the insulative sleeve.